

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7612

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 YAOUNDE 290

NODIS

FOR SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PFOR, AO, OAU, CM

SUBJECT: ANGOLA: CAMEROONIAN VIEWS AFTER THE OAU SUMMIT

REF: A. STATE 10166; B. YAOUNDE 263

1. SUMMARY. IN THE WAKE OF THE OAU SUMMIT, CAMEROON REMAINS SOLIDLY CONVINCED OF THE RIGHTNESS OF THE POSITION IT HAS TAKEN OF STRONGLY OPPOSING THE IMPOSITION OF A SOVIET-ASSISTED MPLA REGIME IN ANGOLA. BUT THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND OTHER FOREIGN POLICY EXPERTS RECOGNIZE THE GROWING DESPAIR OF MPLA'S OPPONENTS AND SEE SALVATION ONLY IN THE TERMINATION OF SOVIET/ CUBAN INTERFERENCE THROUGH US PRESSURES (OR INTERJECTING COUNTER-BALANCING US AID ON THE OTHER SIDE). FOR THE MOMENT, THE INCLINATION SEEMS TO BE TO "WAIT AND SEE" WHAT COMES OUT OF THE KISSINGER-BREZHNEV TALKS AND WHAT HAPPENS MILITARILY ON THE GROUND, RATHER THAN EXERT GREAT EFFORT IN COORDINATING WITH OTHER MODERATES TO HOLD OR IMPROVE THE DIPLOMATIC LINE AMONG AFRICANS. FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE, IT IS MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS THAT CAMEROONIANS PERCEIVE AS LIKELY TO BECOME DECISIVE. END SUMMARY.

2. PURSUANT INSTRUCTIONS REF A, I SAW FOREIGN MINISTER KEUTCHA JANUARY 22 TO ELICIT INFORMATION RE OAU SUMMIT AND PLANS FOR NEXT STEPS, AND TO REAFFIRM MAIN LINES OF US POLICY AND ENCOURAGE GURC TO PERSIST. KEUTCHA REPRESENTED PRESIDENT AHIDJO AT OAU

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SUMMIT. REF B REPORTED MAIN POINT MADE BY KEUTCHA -- DECISIVE

IMPORTANCE OF SECRETARY'S EFFORTS IN MOSCOW TO ACHIEVE SETTLEMENT OF ANOLAN PROBLEM WITH SOVIETS, INVIEW OF DETERIORATING SITUATION ON THE GROUND. THIS MESSAGE REPORTS CONVERSATION WITH KEUTCHA IN GREATER DETAIL, AS WELL AS COMMENTS MADE BY OTHER KEY MEMBERS CAMDEL AT ADDIS MEETING.

3. AFTER MY GENERAL REMARKS, KEUTCHA LAUNCHED INTO ARTICULATION OF GURC'S STILL-SOLID VIEWPOINT ON ANGOLA WITH CONSIDERABLE FERVOR. HE EXPRESSED THANKS FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY SCHAUFLE'S DECEMBER 30 VISIT AND FOR VARIOUS DOCUMENTS ON ANGOLA I HAD SENT PRIOR TO FON-MIN'S DEPARTURE FOR ADDIS. KEUTCHA SEVERAL TIMES MENTIONED THAT SOME AFRICAN STATES INCLUDING GUINEA HAD ATTACKED GURC AFTER SCHAUFLE VISIT FOR BEING "IN US POCKET." HE CONSIDERED SUCH CHARGES INSUFFERABLE ATTACK ON SOVEREIGN STATE AND VEHEMENTLY INSISTED THAT CAMEROONIAN POSITION REPRESENTED "TRUTH," JUSTICE, EQUITY, HUMANITY AND WAS IN CONFORMITY WITH AFRICAN OPINION. "PRESIDENT AHIDJO WOULD HAVE TOLD BREZHNEV THE SAME THING HE TOLD SCHAUFLE." AFRICAN STATES WHO RECOGNIZE LUANDA REGIME WERE ACTING OUT OF IDEOLOGICAL MOTIVES; AFRICA SHOULD ACT ON ITS OWN, NOT BASED ON IMPORTED IDEOLOGIES. CAMEROON, ON ANGOLA AS ALSO IN UN VOTING, WAS NOT A ROBOT, BUT FOLLOWED AN HONEST POLITY OF NON-ALIGNMENT. "WE ARE NOT COMMUNIST, AND DON'T INTEND TO BE. IT IS NOT IN OUR NATURE." HE POINTED OUT THAT IN ITS FIGHT AGAINST THE COMMUNIST SUPPORTED UPC INSURGENCY, CAMEROON WAS THE FIRST AFRICAN COUNTRY TO RESIST COMMUNIST PENETRATION (AND HE HAD BEEN PERFECT OF DIVISION WHERE INSURGENCY WAS CENTERED). THOUGH CAMEROON MIGHT SHARE VIEWS ON CERTAIN ISSUES WITH A COUNTRY, THAT DIDN'T MEAN CAMEROON WAS IN THAT COUNTRY'S POCKET.

4. KEUTCHAS EXPRESSED DEEP CONCERN ABOUT THE ANGOLAN SITUATION WHICH PRESENTED SERIOUS RISKS TO NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES, AMONG WHICH CAMEROON INCLUDED ITSELF. CAMEROON DID NOT WISH TO IMMOSE ANY REGIME ON ANGOLA. IF PEACE IS TO RETURN, IT MUST BE REMEMBERED THAT THREE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS FOUGHT AGAINST THE PORTUGUESE. HE WENT ON TO SAY -- AND EMPHASIZED HE HAD TOLD SOVIET AMBASSADDOR SAME THING A FEW DAYS EARLIER -- THAT IF THE FNLA AND UNITA WERE BEATEN AND NOT INCLUDED IN THE GOVERNMENT, THE RESULT WOULD BE GUERILLA WARFARE. THIS COULD CONSUME ANGOLA'S ENERGIES FOR YEARS AND BLOCK THE MOBILIZATION OF THE COUNTRY'S RESOURCES FOR DEVELOPMENT. IT WOULD BE WRONG TO IMPOSE THE MPLA BY FORCE. THOUGH A
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MILITARY VICTORY MIGHT BE ACHIEVED, THE SOVEITS HAD TO RECOGNIZE TRIBAL REALITIES OF AFRICA. NO MATTER HOW WELL ARMED A REGIME IS, PEOPLE WILL FIGHT. MUCH OF ANGOLA WAS ETHNICALLY UNITA'S. IN THE LONG RUN, THE RESULT WOULD BE DEFEAT FOR A SOVIET-IMPOSED REGIMME. AFTER REPEATING THAT CAMEROON DID NOT WISH TO IMPOSE ANY PARTICULAR REGIME, HE CITED MOZAMBIQUE, TANZANIA, GUINEA AS LEFTIST-ORIENTED REGIMES WITH WHICH CAMEROON MAINTAINED GOOD RELATIONS; THEN ADDED "CONGO IS A BASE OF COMMUNISM IN CENTRAL AFRICA, BUT WE DON'T

BOTHER THEM."

5. KEUTCHA INSISTED THAT THE OAU SUMMIT WAS NOT A COMPLETE FAILURE EVEN THOUGH IT HAD FAILED TO RESOLVE ANGOLAN PROBLEM. AFRICA WAS "WOUNDED," BUT THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE OAU STRUCTURE IS TOTTERING, SINCE MEMBERS WHO DISAGREE ON ANGOLA ISSUE MAY AGREE ON OTHER ISSUES.

6. KEUTCHA MENTIONED WITH MOCK PRAISE THAT THE US HAD ITS OWN VERY SPECIAL DEMOCRACY. HE CITED THE ROLE OF CONGRESS AND ITS ABILITY TO LIMIT THE ADMINISTRATION'S FREEDOM OF ACTION. HE MARVELLED AT PHENOMENON OF CONGRESSMAN DIGGS' PRESS CONFERENCE IN ADDIS, AND MENTIONED ROLE OF MEDIA. IN CONTRAST, HE NOTED THAT SOCIALIST COUNTRIES ACT WITHOUT RESTRAINT AND SPEAK WITH SINGLE VOICE. IT IS NOT KNOWN HOW MUCH MATERIEL THE SOVIETS ARE SENDING IN, WHEREAS EVERYTHING THE US DOES IS KNOWN. AID SENT IN SECRETLY HAS LIMITED VALUE. THE US IS VIRTUALLY BOUND HAND AND FOOT. THERE IS DIPLOMATIC AID (E.G. THE KISSINGER-BREZHNEV TALKS), BUT ON THE GROUND THERE IS A STRUGGLE AND THE MPLA IS WINNING. PEOPLE TEND TO RUN TO THE WINNING SIDE. IF THE MPLA CONQUERS VIRTUALLY ALL OF ANGOLA, CAMEROON WOULD BE FORCED TO TAKE THIS INTO ACCOUNT AND TO RECOGNIZE REGIME IN LUANDA. IF NOTHING WERE TO COME OF KISSINGER-BREZHNEV TALKS, CAMEROON WOULD BE OBLIGED TO RECOGNIZE THE REALITIES OF WHAT HAS HAPPENED. THE POSITION OF THE MODERATES COULD BE KEPT SOLID ONLY IF THEY COULD SEE UNITA CONTINUING TO RESIST.

7. CAMEROON, KEUTCHA CLAIMED, WAS THE NO.ONE LEADER OF THE MODERATE GROUP AT ADDIS. BUT HE RECOGNIZED THAT IF THE MPLA GARNERED 24 VOTES, THE OAU COULD NOT REFUSE TO ADMIT IT AS A MEMBER. THIS WOULD BE ADMINISTRATIVE MATTER FOR OAU SECRETARIAT AND AUTOMATIC.

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8. AFTER KEUTCHA'S LONG EXPOSITION, WE THEN ENGAGED IN MORE SPECIFIC DIALOGUE. KEUTCHA JUDGED THAT IF THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS PLAYED ANY ROLE AT ADDIS, IT WAS VERY DISCREET. HE WAS AWARE OF THE CUBAN DELEGATION THERE,BUT COMMENTED THAT THEY WERE NOT RPT NOT ADMITTED AS OBSERVERS. DESPITE THE SOLIDARITY ESTABLISHED BY MODERATES AT ADDIS, KEUTCHA RECOGNIZED THAT SOVEREIGN COUNTRIES COULD DO WHAT THEY WISHED AND MORE COUNTRIES MIGHT RECOGNIZE THE MPLA. HE NOTED IT WOULD BE EASIER FOR THE OPPOSITION TO PEEL MEMBERS OFF FROM THE MODERATE GROUP THAN THE OTHER WAY AROUND, SINCE IT IS EASIER TO RECOGNIZE THAN TO WITHDRAW RECOGNITION. SUCH A DEGENERATIVE PROCESS COULD BE ACCELERATED BY CHANGES IN THE POSITION ON THE GROUND. HE DID NOT SEEM TO KNOW OF ANY ACTIVE POST-ADDIS COORDINATION GOING ON AMONG THE MODERATES. HE DESCRIBED THIS IMMEDIATE POST-ADDIS PERIOD AS ONE IN WHICH COUNTRIES --

PRESUMABLY MEANING CAMEROON -- WERE "REFLECTING" TO SEE WHAT THEY COULD DO. IN CONCLUSION, KEUTCHA AGAIN MENTIONED GLOOMILY THE POSSIBILITY OF MPLA OCCUPYING ALL OF ANGOLA. THE MODERATES WOULD HESITATE IF THE US SHOWED WEAKNESS IN SUPPORTING THE FNLA/UNITA COALITION. SECRETARY KISSINGER'S ACTION AT MOSCOW WAS THE DETERMINING FACTOR. KEUTCHA WAS VERY ANXIOUS TO KNOW THE RESULT OF THE MOSCOW DISCUSSIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

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FOR SECRETARY FRMM AMBASSADOR

9. IN ADDITION TO FOREGOING MEETING WITH KEUTCHA, AMBASSADOR AND OTHER EMBASSY OFFICERS WERE ABLE TO DISCUSS ANGOLA AT SOCIAL OCCASION JANUARY 22 WITH TWO OTHER IMPORTANT MEMBERS OF CAMDEL AT ADDIS: FOREIGN MINISTRY DIRECTOR OF AFRICAN AND ASIAN AFFAIRS (ETIAN ELLEIH ELLE) AND PRESIDENCY STAFFER HANDLING FOREIGN AFFAIRS (SAMUEL LIBOCK). IT WAS CLEAR FROM THEIR COMMENTS AND FROM THOSE OF OTHER KNOWLEDGEABLE CAMEROONIAN OFFICIALS THAT THE CAMEROONIAN POSITION AGAINST AN MPLA TAKEOVER OF ANGOLA IS STRONGLY HELD AND APPARENTLY HAS THE GENUINE SUPPORT OF THE LOCAL "FOREIGN AFFAIRS ESTABLISHMENT." CAMDELS WERE ANGERED BY OAU RADICALS' CHARGE THAT DRAFT RESOLUTIONS INTRODUCED BY THEM HAD BEEN DICTATED BY ASST SECERTARY SCHAUFEELE, A CHARGE APPARENTLY BASED ON STORY IN TIME MAGAZINE. ELLEIH ELLE, AS DID KEUTCHA, BOASTED THAT CAMEROON WAS THE LEADER, OR AT LEAST ONE OF THE LEADERS, OF THE MODERATES AT ADDIS. THE GROUP, HE CLAIMED, MET REGULARLY AT THE CAMEROONIAN EMBASSY. ELLEIH ELLE MENTIONED ONLY SIERRA LEONE AS AMONG THE SHAKIER MEMBERS OF THE MODERATE GROUP.

10. IN WHAT MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE BEEN A MEANINGFUL REFLECTION OF CONCERN AT THE PRESIDENCY, LIBOCK ASKED AN EMBASSY OFFICER TWO POINTED QUESTIONS: (1) WOULD SECRETARY KISSINGER USE THE SALT TALKS TO EXERT PRESSURE ON THE SOVIETS RE ANGOLA?; (2) IS THE US THINKING OF TRYING TO CONVINCE THE SOVIETS TO AGREE TO A COALITION GOVERNMENT BETWEEN THE MPLA AND UNITA?

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11. ASKED WHAT HE THOUGHT MIGHT BE THE EVENTUAL OUTCOME IN ANGOLA, ELLEIH ELLE SPECULATED THAT HE COULD FORESEE THREE POSSIBILITIES: (1) IF THE SOVIET UNION, AT US PRODDING, AGREED TO GET OUT AND WITHDRAW SUPPORT, THE AFRICANS COULD WORK THINGS OUT. (2) IF THE RUSSIANS PERSISTED, THE MPLA WOULD WIN MILITARILY. THE MPLA COULD THEN GOVERN EFFECTIVELY ONLY IF REPEAT IF IT TOOK IN GENUINE FNLA/UNITA REPRESENTATION WITHIN ITS FOLD, BUT THIS SEEMED HIGHLY UNLIKELY AT THIS POINT. (3) THE FINAL POSSIBILITY THEN WOULD BE AN MPLA VICTORY, AFTER WHICH HE WOULD EXPECT NETO EVENTUALLY TO BE ASSASSINATED AND THE MILITARY TO TAKE OVER AND WORK OUT A FEASIBLE NON-IDEOLOGICAL NATIONAL SOLUTION. PREFERABLE TO THIS LIT ALTERNATIVE, FOR THE WELL BEING OF THE ANGOLANS THEMSELVES, WOULD BE THE PREVENTION NOW OF AN MPLA VICTORY AND THE ACHIEVEMENT SOMEHOW OF A NATIONAL UNITY SOLUTION.
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